

# **HB 1930**

## **Strategic Planning Bill**

Representative James White, Author

Testimony of Rodney J. Thompson  
April, 23, 2015

Since the existing statute regarding the community justice plan has been enacted, community supervision and corrections departments (CSCDs) have experienced difficulty in meeting requirements due to the labor-intensive process which is required to prepare and distribute the current community justice plan. Cumbersome and voluminous, current plan required components have evolved into meaningless, bureaucratic tasks for most CSCDs to complete.

Departments desire an uncomplicated process which actually assists in planning for current and future needs and services. Supported by the Texas Probation Association, HB 1930 provides for an improved strategic planning process which encompasses many of the ideals of current practices in community supervision.

This bill will allow for the local departments, criminal courts and commissioners courts to make the best decision locally on whether to have a criminal justice council and what members are appropriate for the community. The bill redacts the one size fits all approach to community supervision that we have have been changing in Texas and using practices that are effective at a local level.

While I was with Angelina County the 2014/2015 plan for our medium sized county was 95 pages long or over 10 pages per program. The pages necessary for the council came to over 3400 pages. The bill will delete the requirement for information that is already provided to CJAD and Judicial Boards in other formats such as budget information.

1.) To implement a planning process that supports the Texas Risk Assessment System (TRAS);

- 2.) To implement a planning process that proactively assesses and strategizes Community Supervision and Corrections Department's (CSCDs) resources;
- 3.) To implement a planning process that ensures CSCDs internally audit their Diversion Program (DP) grants on an annual basis.
  - a. CSCDs will be allowed to establish their own program objectives (i.e. "To reduce recidivism among caseload participants by 2%, etc.), however;
  - b. CSCDs will be required to internally audit the extent that they are following the grant conditions
  - c. Results of internal audits will be kept with the Strategic Plan as it moves forward
- 4.) To create a planning document that is simple, meaningful and useful to CJAD and CSCDs;
- 5.) To implement a document (i.e. the Strategic Plan) that is flexible and more easily modified, based on the need(s) of the CSCDs.

This bill has the potential to make our process much more effective and efficient with no costs to the state.

Sincerely,

Rodney J. Thompson

Texas Probation Association

Harris County  
Community Supervision and Corrections Department

Teresa May, Ph.D.  
Director



Brian Lovins, Ph.D.  
Assistant Director

April 21, 2015  
Chairman Jim Murphy  
House Corrections Committee  
Texas House of Representatives  
Austin, Texas 78701

Chairman Murphy and Committee:

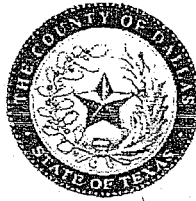
As Director of the Harris County Community Supervision and Corrections Department (HCCSCD), I am in full support of HB1930 as written by Representative James White. The Texas State Legislature has led the Nation in the implementation of evidence based practices in criminal justice over the past several years. The steps taken by the legislature has allowed CSCDs to implement effective programs and strategies that have diverted thousands of offenders from incarceration in State Jail and Prison, ultimately saving lives and millions of dollars in incarceration costs. However, the process CSCDs use to request state funding each biennium has not been realigned to better fit the changing goals and diversion initiatives set out by the legislature over the past decade.

HB1930 solves this problem by realigning the antiquated and redundant process and format CSCDs use to request State funding to an efficient and meaningful process and structure that mirrors the diversion initiatives and strategies that have been implemented over the past decade. At the same time, the new process and format allows each CSCD to prepare a strategic plan and propose diversion programs that are uniquely aligned to the needs of the local jurisdiction's diversion efforts. I am proud of the steps the Texas State Legislature has taken to advance our criminal justice system and believe HB1930 simply brings an antiquated process in line with the successful diversion initiatives set out by the legislature and implemented over the past decade.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teresa May, Ph.D.".

Teresa May Ph.D.  
Director  
Harris County CSCD  
713-755-2704



## COMMUNITY SUPERVISION AND CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT

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Jeff Arnold  
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April 22, 2015

Chairman Jim Murphy  
House Corrections Committee  
Texas House of Representatives  
Austin, Texas 78701

Chairman Murphy and Committee:

HB1930 as written by Representative James White is a bill that will make a significant difference in community supervision in Texas. This bill will allow departments in the state to be more efficient and effective in providing services to the citizens and the Legislature as we move forward in implementing best practices around the state. HB 1930 solves the problem created with an antiquated and redundant process and the format CSCD's use to request State funding. The new format will allow for an efficient and meaningful process and structure that mirrors the diversion initiatives and strategies that have been implemented over the past decade.

HB 1930 will allow departments to create local councils that reflect the make-up of the community and not a one size fits all requirement that may not be effective for each department. This leaves the decision making process in the hands of the local judiciary, commissioners courts and departments to be responsive to their constituents. This bill will make an important difference in the time spent by our departments.

  
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Javed Syed, Director  
Dallas County CSCD


**Written Testimony in favor of HB 1930**

Chairman Jim Murphy and members of the House Committee on Corrections:

My name is Leighton Iles, and I currently serve as the Director of Tarrant County Community Supervision and Corrections Department. I am also an appointed member of the Judicial Advisory Council. I support the committee substitute for HB 1930 which changes the planning process for community supervision and corrections departments (CSCDs). This change in statute will enable departments to engage in a more practical and meaningful strategic planning process. The current community justice planning requirements codified in statute are outdated and no longer serve as an efficient planning tool for departments. Over the past two years and with the assistance of TDCJ-CJAD staff, several CSCDs have piloted strategic planning and reported overwhelmingly positive support for this process.

The statutory changes contemplated by HB 1930 are much needed improvements to our current planning process. I urge all members of the House Committee on Corrections to support the bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony supporting HB 1930.

Sincerely,



Leighton Iles

Director

Tarrant Count CSCD